Over the Counter and Prescription Drug Abuse

A Growing Problem...

We Will Discuss

- Prescription vs. OTC medications
- Alarming trends
- Myths about prescription drug abuse
- Specific medications of abuse
- What you can do!

Prescription vs. OTC Medications

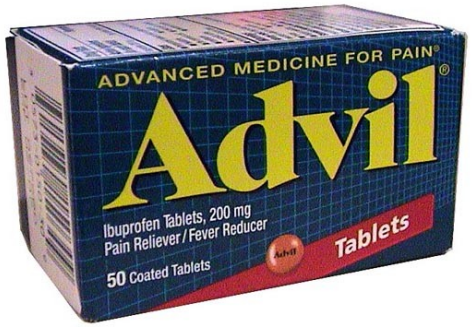
- Prescription medications
  - Require prescription from a licensed prescriber
  - Cannot be dispensed by a pharmacist without a prescription
  - Examples: high blood pressure medications, antibiotics and narcotic pain relievers

Prescription vs. OTC Medications

- Over-the-counter (OTC) medications
  - Can be purchased without a prescription
  - Relatively safe at recommended doses
  - Can interact with some prescription medications

OTC Medications

- Examples:



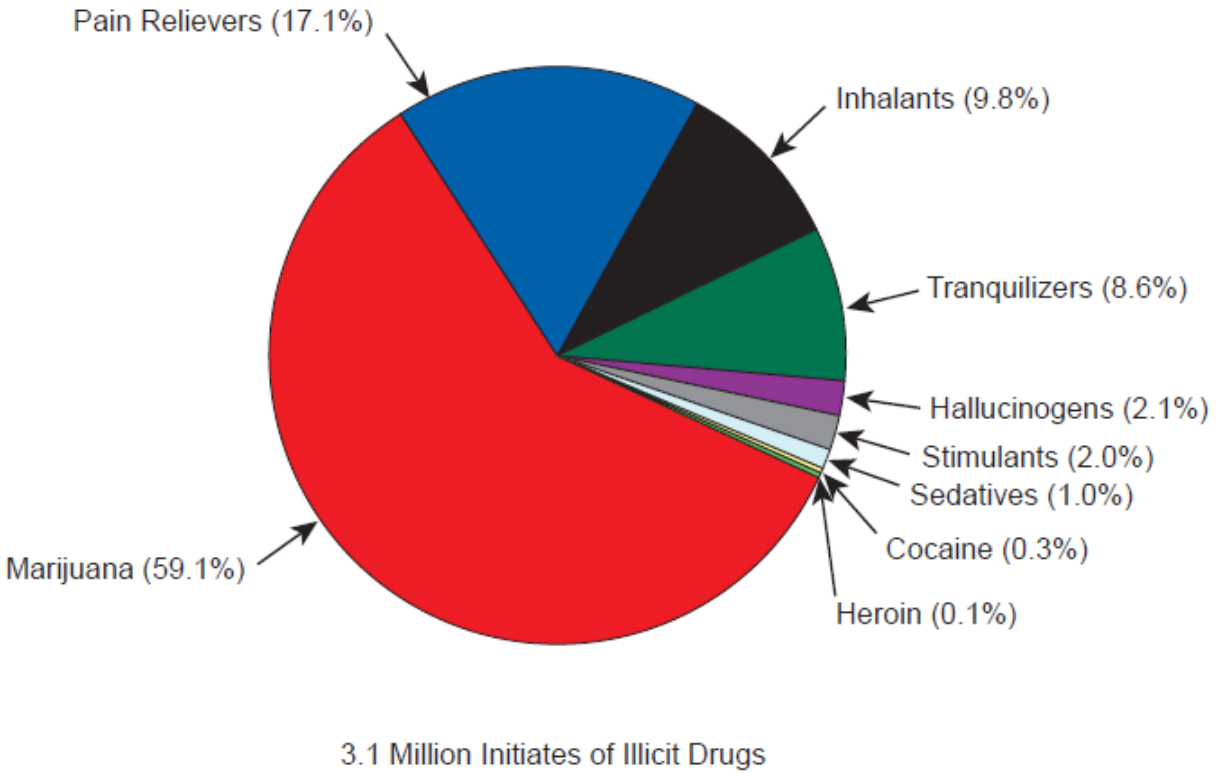
Zantac
75
Ranitidine Tablets 75 mg / Acid Reducer
PREVENTS & RELIEVES
HEARTBURN Associated with Acid Indigestion & Sour Stomach
80 Tablets (80 Doses)

Alarming Trends

Alarming Trends

- Between 6 and 7 million Americans have abused prescription medications in the past month.
- Everyday, approximately 2,700 kids between 12 and 17 abuse a prescription pain killer for the first time.

Figure 5.1 First Specific Drug Associated with Initiation of Illicit Drug Use among Past Year Illicit Drug Initiates Aged 12 or Older: 2009



2009 National Survey on Drug Use and Health

Alarming Trends

- In a recent survey, 10% of 12th graders reported using Vicodin without a prescription in the past year.

- Past year abuse of prescription pain killers now ranks second - only behind marijuana - as the Nation's most prevalent illegal drug problem.

National Institute on Drug Abuse & Office of National Drug Control Policy

Alarming Trends

Myths

Myth

- MYTH: It is safer to abuse prescription drugs than illegal drugs
- 40% of teens consider prescription drugs to be much safer than street drugs

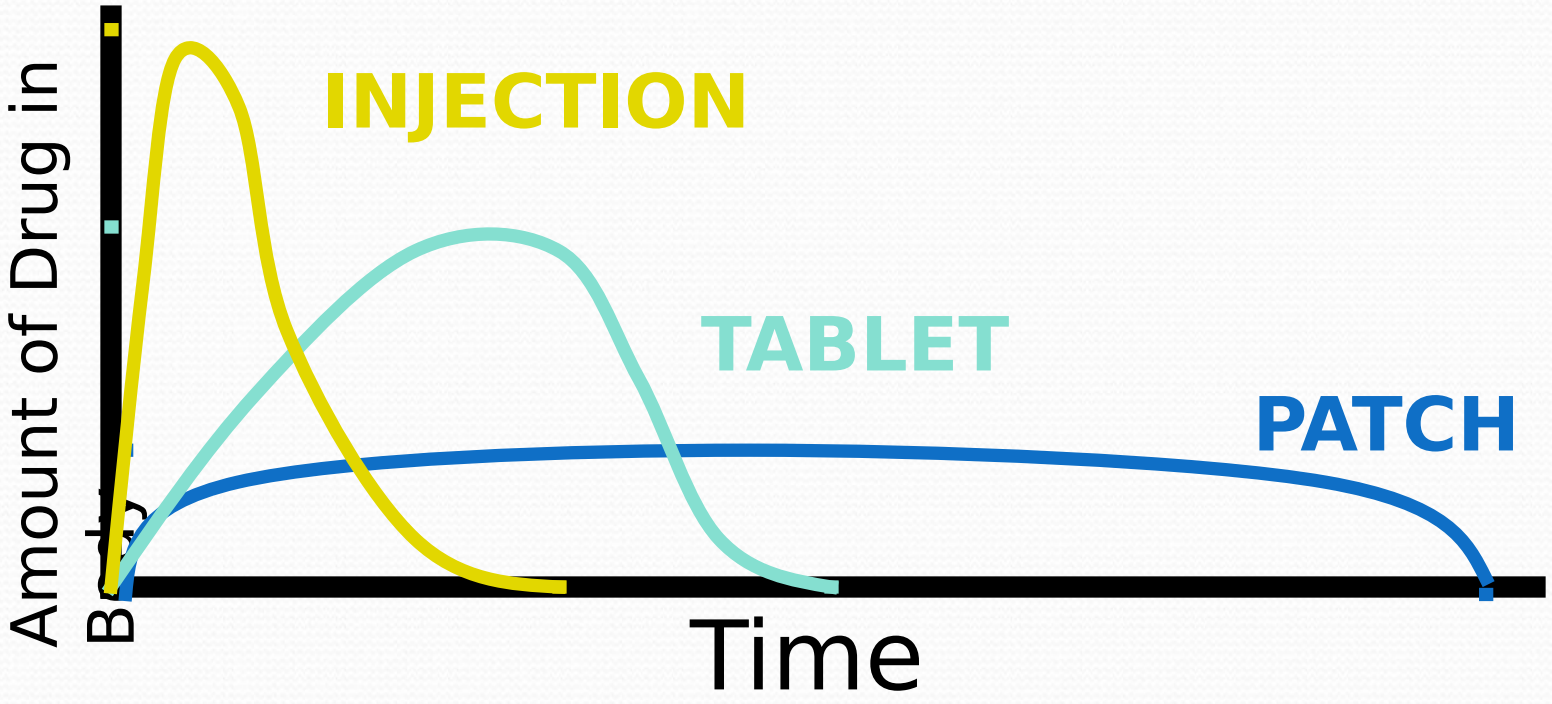
Partnership for a Drug-Free America

Reality: They aren't safer!

- In 2007, 856,000 emergency department visits were due to non-medical use of prescription or OTC medications
- Unintentional drug poisonings are now the second leading cause of accidental death in the US

Reality: They aren't safer!

- Medications are often modified by drug abusers before use



Myth

- MYTH: Prescription drugs are not addictive
- 3 out of 10 teens believe prescription pain relievers are not addictive, even if not prescribed by a doctor

Partnership for a Drug-Free America

Reality: They are addictive!

- Admission to treatment centers for non-heroin opioid dependence has increased 600% in Wisconsin since 2000

Specific Medications of Abuse

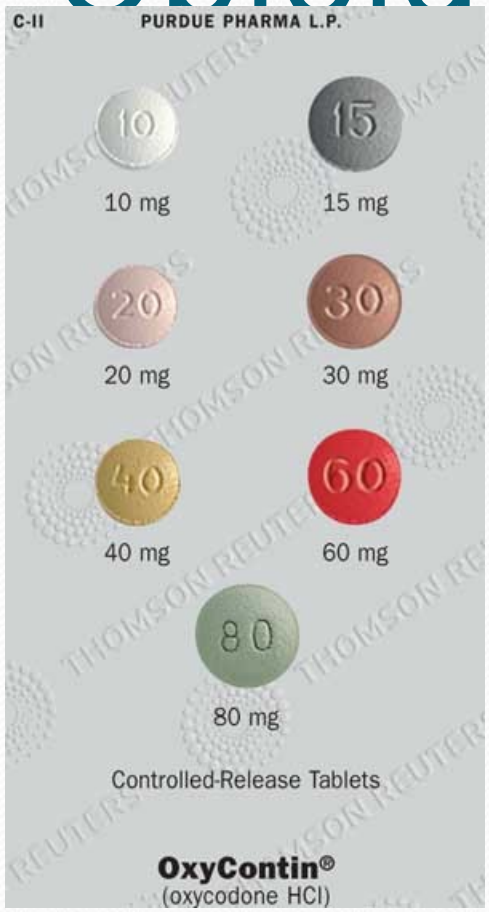
- Opioids
- Dextromethorphan
- Stimulants
- Benzodiazepines

Drugs of Abuse: Opioids

- What are Opioids?
  - A class of narcotic pain killers such as:
    - OxyContin® (oxycodone)
    - Percocet ® (oxycodone and acetaminophen)
    - Duragesic ® patch (fentanyl)
    - Vicodin ® (hydrocodone and acetaminophen)
    - Codeine
      - Codeine cough syrup can be purchased from a pharmacist without a prescription

Drugs of Abuse: Opioids

Inactive ingredients: Hydroxyethyl cellulose, ethylene vinyl-acetate copolymer, silicone adhesive between polyester backings.
Usual dosage: For information for use, see accompanying product literature.
Apply immediately upon removal from pouch.
Do not store unpouched.
Store at 20°-25°C (68°-77°F). [See USP Controlled Room Temperature.]
DO NOT USE IF SEAL ON POUCH IS BROKEN
See patient instructions for disposal information.
Watson Laboratories, Inc.
Corona, CA 92880 USA
200389-00
NDC 0591-3213-54
Fentanyl
Transdermal System
75 mcg/h
In vivo delivery of 75 mcg/h fentanyl for 72 hours
NOT FOR ACUTE OR POSTOPERATIVE USE
WATSON
Rx only
One (75 mcg/h) System
Each transdermal system contains:
7.5 mg fentanyl and 0.3 mL alcohol USP
KEEP OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN
ATTENTION: Dispense only by patient's or health care professional's request.



Drugs of Abuse: Opioids

- Effects of opioids in *healthy people*
  - ***Euphoria***, slowed (or stopped) breathing, vomiting, confusion, sedation, unconsciousness, coma
- Opioids taken with other drugs can cause dangerous interactions
  - Alcohol
  - Depressants such as sleeping pills, antihistamines, benzodiazepines
  - Some antidepressants

Stories of Abuse…

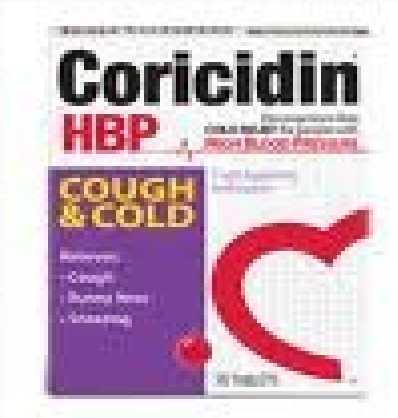
- Ryan is a 17 year old high school senior that got addicted to “Oxy”
- Christopher is a 19 year old that died as a result of an overdose

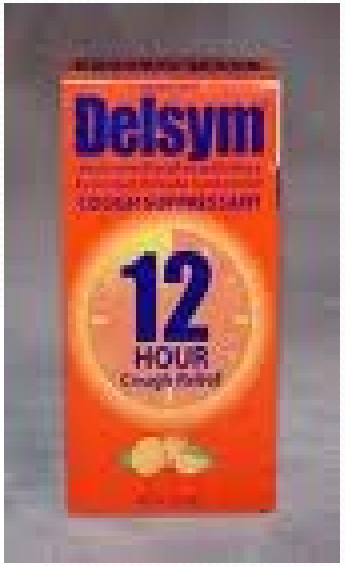
NPR News: http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=5061674

Drugs of Abuse: Dextromethorphan

- What is Dextromethorphan?
  - Cough medicine found in OTC cough and cold medications
    - Coricidin Cough and Cold ®
    - Cheracol Plus Cough Syrup ®
    - Robitussin Cough ®
    - And many, many more
- Often the ingredients in the syrups are just as dangerous in high quantities
    - Acetaminophen – liver problems
    - Ibuprofen or aspirin – stomach and bleeding problems
    - Chlorpheniramine – vomiting, passing out
    - And many, many more

Drugs of Abuse: Dextromethorphan





Drugs of Abuse: Dextromethorphan

- Effects of dextromethorphan at high doses
  - Hallucinations, slowed breathing, excitement, vomiting
- Dextromethorphan taken with other drugs can cause dangerous interactions
  - Antidepressant medications
  - Opiates
  - Depressants (including alcohol)

Dextromethorphan Abuse

Jonathan, a student at Illinois State University, died of a dextromethorphan overdose at the age of 22

Dateline NBC: http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/4608341/ns/dateline_nbc/

Drugs of Abuse: Stimulants

- What are stimulants?
  - Typically prescribed for ADHD or narcolepsy
  - Adderall ® (amphetamine/dextroamphetamine)
  - Concerta ® (methylphenidate)
  - Ritalin ® (methylphenidate)

- Used recreationally or as a study tool for students

Drugs of Abuse: Stimulants

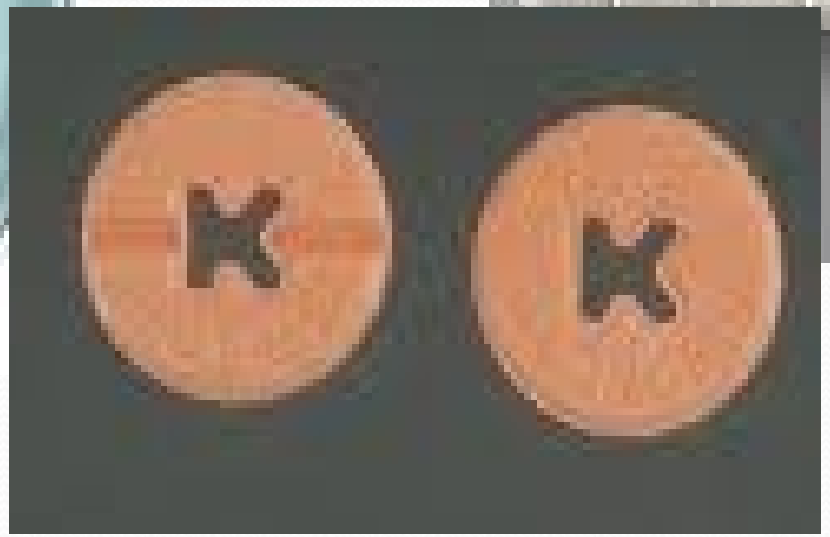
Drugs of Abuse: Stimulants

- Effects of stimulants in healthy people
  - Visual changes, overstimulation, seizures, high blood pressure (which can lead to stroke, heart attack and death)
  - Lack of sleep and weightloss
- Stimulants taken with other drugs can cause dangerous interactions
  - Especially antidepressants

Drugs of Abuse: Benzodiazepines

- What are Benzodiazepines?
  - Benzodiazepines are used to treat anxiety, insomnia, muscle spasms and seizures
  - Valium ® (diazepam)
  - Xanax ® (alprazolam)
  - Klonopin ® (clonazepam)
  - Rohypnol ® (flunitrazepam)

Drugs of Abuse: Benzodiazepines



Drugs of Abuse: Benzodiazepines

- Effects of benzodiazepines in healthy people
  - Slowed breathing, muscle weakness, sedation, low blood pressure
- Benzodiazepines taken with other drugs can cause dangerous interactions
  - Alcohol
  - Other depressants

Preventing Prescription Drug Abuse

How ***Pharmacists*** Prevent Abuse

- Check prescriptions for signs of fraud
- Coordinate and communicate with doctors
- Monitor medication refills to prevent overuse
- Follow legal requirements designed to protect patients from overuse and abuse
- Provide patient education
  - How medications should be used
  - How to store medications
  - How to dispose of medications

Most Teens Find Drugs at Home

- Preventing diversion from home/relatives
  - Keep track of how much of each medicine you have at home
  - Consider keeping medications in a locked location
  - Properly dispose of unused medications

Be Aware

- Monitor for physical and behavioral changes in teens
- Communication is key
- Review online resources provided in your handout
- Be part of a community wide effort!

For additional information